



General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

114th plenary meeting

Tuesday, 31 August 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Announcement regarding the results of the election of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before proceeding further, I wish to make an announcement concerning the membership of the General Committee of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Members will recall that, for the sixty-fifth session, the President, the 21 Vice-Presidents and the Chairpersons of the First Committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and the Second, Fifth and Sixth Committees were elected on 11 June 2010. There remained the election of the Chairperson of the Third Committee to take place at a later date. Also, the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations, who was appointed Chairperson of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), has since ended his tour of duty in New York.

I should now like to inform members that, on 27 August 2010, His Excellency Mr. Chitsaka Chipaziwa of Zimbabwe and His Excellency Mr. Michel Tommo Monthe of Cameroon were elected Chairpersons of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and of the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, respectively, and are accordingly members of the General Committee for that session. I congratulate the Chairpersons of the Special Political

and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) and of the Third Committee on their election.

The Chairpersons of the six Main Committees and the 21 Vice-Presidents for the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly having been elected, the General Committee of the General Assembly for the sixty-fifth session has thus been fully constituted in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure.

Agenda item 104 (*continued*)

Crime prevention and criminal justice

High-level meeting of the General Assembly to formally launch the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 104, entitled "Crime prevention and criminal justice", in order to formally launch the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/293. Members will recall that, on 30 July 2010, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/293, which contained the Global Plan as an annex.

Today's high-level meeting will comprise this formal plenary meeting and an informal segment, to be held immediately following the adjournment of this meeting. Allow me now to make a few introductory remarks.

We meet here today to launch the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in

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Persons. The Plan of Action was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 64/293 on 30 July 2010, after a broad consultative process. I would like to thank again the co-facilitators of this process, the Permanent Representatives of Cape Verde and Portugal, for their commendable efforts in facilitating the process. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their engagement on this issue.

The Plan of Action is intended to foster concerted action to defend the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including the right of all human beings to be born free and the right not to be held in slavery or servitude. The Plan of Action affirms that slavery and the slave trade are prohibited in all their forms. Fulfilling these commitments must be at the forefront of the international agenda, if we are to protect the world's population, especially the poor and most vulnerable, from human trafficking, a modern-day form of slavery.

By adopting the Plan of Action, Governments have resolved to take concrete action to prevent trafficking in persons, to protect and assist victims, to prosecute related crimes and to strengthen partnerships among Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector, including the media. Governments have also agreed to promote and consider ratifying existing international instruments related to trafficking. The Plan of Action adopts a human-rights-centred approach to efforts to prevent and combat trafficking, and agrees to mainstream the issue of trafficking into broader United Nations policies and programmes on economic and social development, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, education and natural disaster and post-conflict reconstruction. To assist victims, the Plan of Action establishes the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. I encourage Member States to contribute generously to that Fund. Governments are also urged to take all appropriate measures to ensure that victims are not penalized for being trafficked and to protect their privacy, identity and safety.

I commend all Member States for their efforts and commitment to address this urgent issue. I call on all nations and members of civil society to work together to implement the Plan of Action.

Abduction, coercion, trafficking across national and international borders and forcing women and children into sexual exploitation and servitude: this must not be accepted in today's world. As these heinous crimes flourish, thousands of men, women and children are robbed of their safety, their freedom and their dignity. Human trafficking devastates families and tears communities apart. When the history of this horror calls, we cannot let this period be remembered as one in which the global community knew but did not act.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Today we come together to launch the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. This Plan of Action is a clarion call; the presence of all in this room is testimony to its widespread support.

I thank the facilitators — the Permanent Representatives of Portugal and Cape Verde — the President of the General Assembly and all Member States who have worked hard to build consensus. Within the United Nations system, my appreciation goes to the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, the Vienna Forum, the Blue Heart Campaign and our goodwill ambassadors. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, anti-trafficking toolkits and manuals, documentary films, public information and technical assistance have also played a part. I thank all those involved for their commitment and hard work.

Human trafficking is among the worst violations of human rights. It is slavery in the modern age. Every year, thousands of people, mainly women and children, are exploited by criminals who use them for forced labour or the sex trade. No country is immune. Almost all play a part, either as a source of trafficked people, a transit point or a destination.

Ten years ago, the world community spoke out forcefully against human trafficking when the General Assembly adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (resolution 55/25, annex II). Since then, Governments, international organizations and civil society have taken steps to stop this terrible crime against human dignity, which shames us all. But even that is not enough. To

end human trafficking in all its forms, we must take a common approach, coordinated and consistent across the globe.

The Global Plan of Action will help us to achieve exactly that. It builds on, and will strengthen, the United Nations trafficking in persons Protocol. It will engage Governments and criminal justice systems, civil society, the private sector, the media and concerned citizens. And under the Plan, the fight against human trafficking will become part of all the broader development and security policies and programmes of the United Nations.

One of the Plan's most important elements is the creation of a United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for those who are trafficked, especially women and children. The Fund aims to help Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations provide these vulnerable people with protection and support for their physical, psychological and social recovery. After they have been exploited and abused, they should not be punished too.

I urge Member States, the private sector and philanthropists to contribute generously to this Trust Fund. I also urge them to increase technical assistance to countries that support the fight against trafficking but lack financial resources and expertise. These are often countries from which people are trafficked, so their needs are especially urgent.

The Plan of Action also stresses the paramount importance of increased research, data collection and analysis of human trafficking. We must improve our knowledge and understanding of this crime if we are to make good policy decisions and targeted interventions.

The Global Plan of Action strengthens the three Ps: preventing human trafficking, prosecuting offenders and protecting victims. It also promotes a

fourth critical P: partnership. The only way to end human trafficking is by working together, in partnerships between States and within regions, in partnerships within the United Nations under the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) and in public-private partnerships.

The biggest challenge to the Global Plan of Action is to reduce the numbers of people vulnerable to human trafficking. The only way to achieve this is through our work on human rights and development. This highlights the crucial importance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of next month's MDG summit here in New York. Empowering women, fighting discrimination, reducing poverty and keeping children healthy and out of conflict zones: the progress we are making in these respects is also helping to end human trafficking and exploitation.

But as I speak, thousands of people are living as slaves. They need our help now. With this Global Plan of Action, we have announced our steadfast commitment to stop human trafficking. I thank members for their support and urge them to turn the Plan into action.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his important statement.

Members are reminded that an informal segment will take place immediately following the adjournment of this meeting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 104?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.